

SENATE BILL 846
By Harper

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-3-359,
relative to school social workers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-3-359, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

(e) **If** a local education agency (LEA) consistently utilizes its basic education program (BEP) funding to maintain a ratio of at least one (1) school social worker per two thousand (2,000) students; **and**

If the percentage of the LEA's students, who receive free or reduced price school lunches, ranks consistently and substantially above the statewide LEA average; **and**

If the percentage of the LEA's schools, on notice or probation pursuant to §49-1-602, ranks consistently and substantially above the statewide LEA average; **then**

Upon formal application by such LEA for special hardship funding to be used exclusively for employment of additional school social workers, the state board of education may issue a grant for supplemental social worker positions; provided, however, when combined with BEP social worker funding, the number of the LEA's school social workers shall not exceed a ratio of one (1) school social worker per one thousand (1,000) students; provided further, in any fiscal year the provisions of this subsection shall apply only if, and only to the extent that, federal or state funding is provided for such purpose through the state's general appropriation act. If applications

for such special hardship funding exceed available resources, then the state board shall prioritize such grants in order to maximize school improvements in meeting the performance standards of the state board.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2005, the public welfare requiring it.